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ABSTRACT

This report of an organizational analysis of 35 day care centers in New England defines the key factors in the management of a child care organization and assesses the relative proficiency with which the centers deal with these factors. The analysis is restricted to three variables: center size, decision making (level of participation of all staff members in making major decisions), and roles (Comparison between directors and teachers within centers, as well as between directors and teachers in all centers). Data concerning staff-staff, staff-center, and center-community interactions are included. Chapter I explains the techniques and objectives of the project and includes a breakdown of the characteristics of centers visited and persons interviewed. Chapter II presents the findings in making; staff roles; staff relationships; staff motivation; organizational-environmental interaction; organizational and program planning; evaluation of the organization as a whole, the staff, the program and the individual children; and identification of additional problem areas. Chapter III presents conclusions and recommends the following criteria for the organizational health of a day care center: optimum focus on goals, soundness of decision making, utilization of internal and external resources, and openness to change. Appendices include a management self-evaluation questionnaire and an annotated bibliography. (Author/CM)

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ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS of DAY CARE

by Roger Neugebauer

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Should a day care center be operated as a public service or as a private enterprise? While proponents of the entrepreneurial and benevolent aspects of child care have raised this as a central issue in the field, I believe the polarising rhetoric with which this question has been debated has unfortunately obscured two important points. The first is that all day care centers, whether operated on a "non-profit" or "for-profit" basis, are similarly engaged in providing a service to the public and are equally responsible to the public for the safety and well-being of the children under their care. The second point is that no day care center can provide a quality public service if it is not operated as a healthy and effective organization. This second point is based on my observations of day care centers which were not providing quality child care, even though their staff members were highly committed and well-qualified, because they were unable to carry out effectively such organizational functions as decision-making, community relations, accounting, and communication. This is not to say, of course, that if a center is well-managed it will necessarily be able to provide high quality child care. Even the best managed programs are seriously handicapped by the inadequate manner in which day care is funded in this nation. Sound management cannot compensate for inadequate funding. Nevertheless, within the constraints imposed by available funding, the quality of care provided by a center would appear to be related to the degree to which it is effectively managed as an organization.

To explore this issue more fully, I recently conducted an organizational analysis of day care centers throughout New England. The purpose of this analysis was to define more clearly the key factors in the management of a child care organization, as well as to assess the relative proficiency with which centers were dealing with these factors. The attached report is a summary of the results of this analysis. Chapter I explains the techniques and objectives of the project and includes a breakdown of the characteristics

of centers visited and persons interviewed. Chapter II explores the findings in narrative and tabular form. Chapter III presents my conclusions and recommendations. Included in the appendices are a management self-evaluation questionnaire and a selected annotated bibliography which I hope may be of some value to centers in their self-development efforts.

Heavy reliance on statistical analyses can provide a sense of precision and confidence that is not necessarily warranted, especially in a complex subjective field such as child care. Therefore, I have attempted to clarify and qualify the statistics with my observations and interviews. Furthermore, I have compared my findings and conclusions with those of some of the major day care studies, as well as with the theories of experts in the field of organizational psychology.

As this project developed from an informal series of center visits to a methodical survey, it proved to be a demanding, time-consuming endeavor. More significantly, however, it was a richly rewarding experience for me. The overwhelming warmth and openness of all those I encountered in my many visits and the wide diversity in child care approaches and structural arrangements I observed leave me with a strong positive feeling for the underlying strength of this highly publicized but poorly supported field.

I am deeply grateful to all the staff members in the 35 centers for their cooperation and patience during my visits, and I wish to express my appreciation to all those who completed my cumbersome questionnaire. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable guidance provided by my advisors from Lesley College: Meg Cline, Gwen Morgan, George Hein, and Cynthia Cole.

I METHODS

Day Care Perspectives

Day care can be analyzed from many points of view. Each perspective carries with it a different set of priorities and shortcomings (Fein and Clarke-Stewart, 1973). Each perspective in and of itself is important, but none is completely relevant considered in isolation. Therefore, in any analysis of day care it is imperative to be clear as to one's perspective and to the implications and limitations of that perspective.

Most commonly day care has been discussed as a classroom, as a daytime environment for children. This perspective emphasizes the relationships of teacher-to-child, child-to-child, and child-to-physical environment. A second common perspective is to address day care as a service to society. Emphasis here it placed on broader relationships such as parent-to-center, group care-to-alternative forms of child care, and day care costs-to-economic conditions.

This study analyzes day care from an organizational point of view. Day care centers are viewed as small enterprises--as interacting, developing social organizations. This point of view highlights staff-to-staff, staff-to-center, and center-to-community relationships. It is my contention that these relationships, though largely ignored in current early child care literature, are of crucial significance to the quality of care children in the centers experience.

A major limitation of this approach could be a tendency to lose sight of the best interests of the children. For example, a strong emphasis on improving relationships among staff members can be counterproductive if it diverts too much energy and attention from staff-to-child relationships. Clearly, organizational analyses must be directly related to the

needs of the children. The importance of managerial tasks in and of themselves must not be overemphasized.

With this in mind it should be understood that this survey did focus rather narrowly on managerial tasks and relationships. For example, while narrowly on managerial tasks and relationships. For example, while I was able to measure and analyze the relationships among decision-making behavior, communication levels, and staff motivation, I did not correlate these factors with levels of program quality. Nonetheless, in my informal observations and open-ended interviews, as well as in my review of related literature, I have attempted to be alert to any clues as to correlations between managerial and program quality factors; and I have not been timid about offering hypotheses about these matters.

Basically though this analysis was intended to highlight the range and relevance of managerial tasks involved in operating a day care program. It was an effort to identify, not a laundry list of duties, but a priority ordering of tasks and factors requiring the attention of day care staffs. Hopefully, in the future efforts can be initiated to explore more carefully the relationships between organizational strength and program quality.

Research Design

Research for this report was conducted in three phases. Phase I consisted of informal visits to eleven day care centers in Massachusetts and Connecticut in which I observed and participated in daily programs, and interviewed teachers, directors, and parents about the management of day care centers. In the later visits I pre-tested and gradually refined a diagnostic questionnaire. The questionnaire in its final form served as the basis for Phase II which involved visits to twenty-four different day care centers throughout New England. In these visits I interviewed

directors and teachers and had them fill out the questionnaire. Phase III consisted of follow-up visits to six of the centers to interview teachers and directors in more depth about major findings of the statistical analysis.

Centers visited ranged from a rural center housed in a barn surrounded by acres of countryside to a central city program in a crumbling brick building with a glass-strewn asphalt playground; from centers truly child-centered in orientation to some strongly teacher directed; from organizations controlled cooperatively by all staff members to others controlled by central offices located in different states. In selecting these centers a deliberate effort was made to obtain a fairly representative cross-section of programs offering predominantly full day care. Selections were made basically at random from state listings of centers and yellow pages. A statistical breakdown of the centers visited and staff members interviewed can be found in Tables 1 and 2 at the end of this chapter.

In many respects I believe the sampling is a representative one. For example, centers were balanced geographically with similar numbers visited in four different states and with a reasonable sampling of urban, suburban, and rural programs. Furthermore, centers ranged in size of enrollments from 14 to 120 full day children with a fairly even distribution between these extremes.

In other respects, however, imbalances did occur. This is most apparent in respect to the tax structure of centers where two-thirds of the centers in Phase II were operated on a non-profit basis. In contrast 60% of all centers in this country are reported to be profit-making in structure (U. S. Senate, 1971, p. 89). Also, the average years of educational and work experience in child care of the 88 staff members surveyed are somewhat above those of day care personnel nationwide (U. S. Senate, 1971, p. 90).

In terms of curriculums, the centers could not be classified readily into any of the theoretical categories described by child development authorities in comparing program philosophies (Mayer, 1971; Kohlberg, 1972; Moore, 1972). Rather the centers exhibited many different combinations of various program emphases, teaching approaches, classroom groupings, and physical environments. Directors most commonly described their centers' programs as open and child-centered.

Analysis Approaches

Due to the small size of the sample and the rather informal method of selection, I generally restricted statistical analyses to three basic variables:

Center Size. Centers were grouped into three categories based on size of enrollment. The eight Large Centers (hereinafter identified as LC) enrolled between 60 and 120 full day children with an average enrollment of 74; the eight Medium Centers (MC) enrolled between 36 and 50 with an average of 43 children; and Small Centers (SC) enrolled between 14 and 32 with an average of 24 children.

Decision-making. Two categories were identified based on the level of participation of all staff members in the making of major decisions. High Participation Centers (HPC) included the six centers (25% of all) in which the level of participation was the highest and most widespread. Low Participation Centers (LPC) included the six centers in which decision-making was most authoritarian. Centers were classified statistically on the basis of responses to questions regarding decision-making.

Roles. Comparisons were made between responses of directors (D) and teachers (T) within centers as well as between directors and teachers in all centers. (Note: In this report the title "teacher" is meant to apply to all center personnel having direct responsibilities for the care of children.)

Table 1. Characteristics of Centers Visited

	Phase I Centers	Phase II Centers
A. Legal Structure		
Full Staff Partnership (all staff control)	2	1
Limited Staff Partnership (several staff control)	0	2
Family Partnership (one family controls)	0	2
Sole Proprietorship (director controls)	2	2
Governing Board (board controls)	1	8
Sponsored Agency (separate agency or central organizational unit controls)	6	9
B. Tax Structure		
Non-Profit Corporation	7	16
For-Profit Corporation	1	2
For-Profit Non-incorporated Venture	3	6
C. Geographic Location		
Central City or Large Urban	7	9
Suburban or Medium Urban	3	8
Rural or Small Urban	1	7
D. Political Location		
Massachusetts	9	6
Connecticut	1	5
Maine	1	7
New Hampshire	0	6
E. Size of Enrollment		
80 or more full day children	3	4
60 to 79 full day children	3	4
40 to 59 full day children	2	6
20 to 39 full day children	2	6
0 to 19 full day children	1	4

Table 2. Characteristics of Staff Members Surveyed in Phase II

A. Formal Academic Training

--percent of staff members surveyed with the following numbers of courses completed in early childhood education:

No formal coursework	19%
Less than three courses	13%
Four to nine courses	21%
Ten or more courses	47%

--percent of staff members having completed 10 or more courses:

Large Centers	60%
Medium Centers	47%
Small Centers	20%

B. Work Experience

--average years of work experience in child care for individual staff members:

Large Centers	3 3/4 years
Medium Centers	4 1/2 years
Small Centers	5 1/2 years
All Centers	4 1/2 years

C. Continuity

--average years staff members have worked at present center:

Large Centers	2 1/2 years
Medium Centers	2 1/2 years
Small Centers	3 3/4 years
All Centers	2 3/4 years

D. Teaching : Non-Teaching Staff Ratio

--ratio of teaching (daily contact with children) to non-teaching paid staff members:

Large Centers	1.6:1
Medium Centers	1.8:1
Small Centers	5.3:1
All Centers	2.0:1
High Participation Centers	3.8:1
Low Participation Centers	1.1:1

E. Numbers Interviewed

--numbers completing questionnaires in Phase II

Directors (staff with final administrative responsibility)	24
Teachers (paid staff working with children)	64
Average number interviewed per center	3.7

II FINDINGS

Decision-making

The way in which decisions are made in day care centers is not a simple matter. Daily decisions must be made on a wide variety of matters from how to respond to one child's specific act of aggression, to which candidate to hire for a teaching position. Each decision may be handled in a somewhat different manner, and the same decision may be handled differently at different times. Nevertheless, in the long run, certain decision-making patterns tend to emerge in a center based on the formal structure of that organization and the leadership style of the director. In order to define these patterns I had staff members select the method in which major decisions are commonly made in their center from a continuum of methods ranging from the most participative to the most authoritarian (see Table 3.C). This continuum was adapted directly from one developed by organizational psychologist, Robert Tannenbaum (Tannenbaum, 19).

The responses to this question revealed that there is a clear difference in the way directors and teachers perceive decision-making in their centers. Teachers consistently rated decision-making as more authoritarian than did directors. 39% of all teachers indicated that major administrative and managerial decisions are made by their directors without consulting other staff members, while no directors felt decisions are made this way. Conversely, 21% of the directors and only 8% of the teachers indicated that the director participates as an equal member of the staff in making administrative decisions. Although all staff members rated program or curriculum-related decision-making as more participative than administrative, teachers again found it to be more authoritarian than did directors.

Responses also revealed significant differences between the perceptions and the preferences of teachers in terms of decision-making. Teachers were asked to indicate the decision-making methods they preferred to experience. When these responses were compared with their ratings of how decision-making does occur it was found that 65% of the teachers perceived decision-making to be more authoritarian than they preferred it to be in terms of administrative decisions and 67% in terms of program decisions (Table 3.A).

Considered from another perspective, whereas 8% of the teachers perceived the director as participating as an equal member of the staff in the making of administrative decisions, 43% of them preferred decision-making to occur in this manner (Table 3.C).

Teachers were further asked to indicate how specific decisions are made in their center (Table 3.B). In the hiring of teachers 47% of the teachers indicated that teachers' opinions are not seriously considered. In the selection of major classroom equipment, on the other hand, only 10% of the teachers indicated that teachers' opinions are not seriously considered.

Finally, decision-making was considered in relation to center size (Table 3.C). Not surprisingly decision-making was found to be most authoritarian in large centers. On the other hand participation was not rated significantly higher in small centers. 50% of the teachers in large centers and 42% in small centers indicated that major administrative decisions are made by directors without consultation. Decision-making was clearly rated as least authoritarian in the medium centers where only 21% of the teachers indicated decisions are made without consultation.

Program decision-making was also found to be most participative in medium centers with 65% of the teachers indicating that the director participates as an equal in the making of decisions. In large centers 53% of the teachers perceived this to be the case, while in small centers only 35% did.

Table 3. Decision-making

A. Agreement with Decision-making Methods

--percent of teachers who find managerial and administrative decision-making in their center...

Much more authoritarian than they prefer	57%
Somewhat more authoritarian than they prefer	8%
Just as they prefer	31%
Less authoritarian than they prefer	4%

--percent of teachers who find curriculum-related decision-making in their center...

Much more authoritarian than they prefer	43%
Somewhat more authoritarian than they prefer	24%
Just as they prefer	24%
Less authoritarian than they prefer	9%

B. Participation in Specific Decisions

--percent of teachers who find that in the hiring of teachers...

All teachers' opinions are seriously considered	23%
Some teachers' opinions are seriously considered	30%
No teachers' opinions are seriously considered	47%

--percent of teachers who find that in the selection of major classroom equipment...

All teachers' opinions are seriously considered	63%
Some teachers' opinions are seriously considered	26%
No teachers' opionions are seriously considered	10%

C. Perceptions of Decisionmaking

Decisionmaking Methods	Administrative and Managerial Decisionmaking as Perceived by...						Program (curriculum-related) Decisionmaking as Perceived by...					
	All D	All T	Teachers in LC	MC	SC	*	All D	All T	Teachers in LC	MC	SC	*
Director makes decision and announces it.	0%	29%	38%	16%	30%	8%	0%	5%	0%	7%	7%	0%
Director makes decision and sells it.	0%	10%	12%	5%	12%	0%	0%	7%	7%	0%	14%	0%
Director presents tentative decision, gets suggestions, makes final decision.	25%	33%	31%	32%	36%	19%	0%	9%	0%	14%	14%	8%
Director presents problem to some staff members, gets suggestions, makes decision.	21%	10%	12%	10%	6%	6%	16%	14%	20%	0%	24%	0%
Director presents problem to entire staff, gets suggestions, makes decision.	33%	10%	7%	21%	0%	24%	10%	14%	20%	14%	7%	13%
Director presents problem and participates as an equal member of staff in making decision.	13%	4%	0%	16%	0%	16%	38%	5%	7%	0%	7%	19%
Director defines limits and asks staff to make decision.	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	10%	21%	26%	22%	14%	8%
All staff members share equally in defining problems, making decisions.	4%	4%	0%	0%	18%	24%	26%	25%	20%	43%	14%	52%

Note:
D = Directors
T = Teachers
* = As preferred by all teachers

Staff Roles

In reviewing the literature of organizational psychology, one finds that major differences are commonly perceived in the roles of "management" and "labor" in industrial and manufacturing organizations. Given the smaller scale and the service orientation of day care it might be expected that such distinctions do not exist. However, responses to the questionnaire tend to indicate that significant distinctions do exist between the roles of director and teacher.

To begin exploring the question of roles, I had directors indicate the amount of time they devote to various types of day care tasks (Table 4.A). 70% of the directors identified administrative tasks as the ones to which they devote the greatest amount of their time, with funding, budgeting and contractual matters being by far the most time-consuming activities in this category. Relatively few directors devote the greatest amount of their time to human resource management tasks (20%) or to program management tasks (10%). For example, only 9% of the directors spend substantial amounts of their time (11 hours or more per week) on program planning, 27% on dealing with the needs of individual children, 36% on staff supervision and management, and 18% on staff training and development. 83% of the directors spend no time working directly with children on a regular basis.

The role of teachers, on the other hand, is weighted even more heavily in the direction of program management tasks. For example, in only two of the twenty-four centers are teachers given any significant administrative responsibilities. "Head teachers" in most centers are responsible for the daily supervision of the other teachers on their teams, but even for them, most of their time and energy is devoted to the care and education of children.

Thus in a typical day care center it would appear that the roles of director and teacher are quite distinct. The role of the director is substantially administrative in nature and that of the teacher substantially programmatic. The director is not significantly involved in program planning or implementation, and teachers seldom deal with administrative matters.

This separation of roles was further indicated by responses to two other questions (Table 5.A). 43% of the teachers in all centers (and 80% in LPC) indicated that the director is not in close touch with what is happening in the classroom. Furthermore, in only two of the 24 centers does the director have lunch with the teachers on a regular basis.

From my interviews with directors it was clear that most of them do wish to have a clear understanding of classroom activities and do not avoid having lunch with teachers. Most of them expressed the desire to be more involved in the classrooms, but the crush of duties involved in carrying out all the centers' administrative responsibilities curtailed such involvement. Regardless of intentions, an isolation of directors commonly occurs. The degree of this isolation was further disclosed in interviews with teachers when they frequently noted that they did not really know what their directors did during the day except in very general terms.

The role of the director tends to vary according to the size of the center. Not surprisingly as the size of the center increases the proportion of time directors devote to administrative tasks increases. In large centers 100% of the directors devote the greatest amount of their time to administrative matters, while in medium centers 71% do so, and in small centers only 43% do.

Table 4. Staff Roles

A. Duties of Director

--percent of directors who spend substantial time (11 hours or more per week) dealing with...

	All C	LC	MC	SC
Needs of individual children	27	0	0	75
Other daily classroom matters	18	0	0	50
Program planning	9	33	0	0
Staff supervision and management	36	17	38	50
Staff training and development	18	17	25	13
Funding, budgeting, and contractual matters	50	83	63	13
Facility and equipment maintenance	23	17	38	13
Other administrative matters	55	67	63	38

--percent of directors who identify as the task upon which they spend the greatest amount of their time dealing with...

	All C	LC	MC	SC
Needs of individual children	20	0	0	57
Staff supervision and management	10	0	29	0
Funding, budgeting, and contractual matters	60	83	71	29
Other administrative matters	10	17	0	14

B. Job Descriptions

--percent of teachers who have written job descriptions in...

All centers	51
Large centers	67
Medium centers	53
Small centers	33
High participation centers	33
Low participation centers	0

--percent of teachers with written job descriptions who find them to...

Accurately describe what they do	79
Serve a meaningful purpose	37

Staff Relationships

When management consultants are brought in by businesses to improve organizational performance they initially attempt to measure various key indicators of organisational health. One of the more effective tools used in these diagnostic efforts was developed by the late Douglas McGregor (McGregor, 1967). McGregor had staff members in an organizational unit rate various functions of interpersonal behavior as they existed in their unit on a scale of one to seven. In all cases a rating of one was indicative of a most unhealthy situation and a rating of seven an extremely healthy one, with ratings from two through six indicating increments between these extremes. Ratings of all respondents were added up and averaged. In general McGregor found that average ratings of four or less denoted functions requiring significant improvement. For this survey I adapted this format to the day care setting, along with a similar one used by McGregor's associates (Schein, 1969), and had all directors and teachers rate their centers.

The tabulation of the ratings revealed significant differences in terms of staff roles and center types (Table 5.B). For example, the ratings of the directors were consistently higher than those of the teachers. Whereas average ratings of directors ranged between 5.5 and 5.7 for four of the eight functions, for teachers the average ratings for these same functions ranged between 4.4 and 4.6. More significant differences appear, however, when ratings are correlated by center size. For six of the eight functions average ratings by teachers in large centers were below 4, whereas all functions were rated at 5 or above by teachers in medium as well as small centers. No significant differences appeared between medium and small centers' ratings. Most significant of all were

the differences between teachers' ratings in High Participation Centers (HPC) and Low Participation Centers (LPC). Teachers' ratings in HPC ranged between 5.2 and 6.0 for all functions, while six of the eight ratings for LPC ranged between 2.8 and 3.1. These ratings indicate the existence of serious problems in interpersonal relations in LPC.

The six functions identified as major problem areas in large centers and LPC (listed in order of seriousness) can be defined in their optimum state as follows:

Communications: Transmission: open, frank, authentic, sufficient.

Control Methods: staff members control their own behavior and performance.

Handling Conflicts: conflicts are acknowledged by staff members and they work them through.

Mutual Support and Trust: staff members trust one another, show genuine concern for one another, and can freely express negative reactions without fearing reprisals.

Communications: Reception: staff members listen to each other and are understood by each other.

Clarity of Objectives: the center's objectives are very clear, frequently discussed, and fully understood by all staff members.

Table 5. Staff Relationships

A. Teacher-Director Relationships

--percent of teachers who indicated the following statements to be true in their centers...

	All C	LC	MC	SC	HPC	LPC
Director and teachers routinely have lunch together...	6	0	0	21	0	20
Director is in close touch with what is happening in the classroom...	57	41	75	57	90	20
Teachers can talk openly with director about teaching problems...	74	77	81	64	82	50
Teachers can talk openly with director about personal problems...	45	41	50	50	55	0

B. Interpersonal Organizational Health

--Staff members were asked to rate each of the following indicators of interpersonal organizational health on a scale of one to seven. In the tabulations below the ratings shown are the average of all responses in each category.

	All Centers		Teachers in			Teachers in	
	D	T	LC	MC	SC	HPC	LPC
Mutual Trust and Support	5.5	4.6	3.6	5.0	5.6	5.5	2.9
Handling of Conflicts	5.6	4.4	3.4	5.2	5.1	5.2	2.9
Control Methods	5.7	4.6	3.6	5.4	5.2	5.9	2.7
Utilization of Resources	5.7	5.2	4.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	4.1
Communications: Transmission	5.6	4.4	3.4	5.0	5.4	5.5	2.8
Communications: Reception	5.6	4.7	3.7	5.2	5.6	5.6	2.9
Clarity of Program Objectives	5.5	4.7	3.8	5.5	5.1	5.7	3.1
Support for Program Objectives	6.0	5.3	5.0	5.2	5.7	6.0	4.4

Motivation

Over a decade ago Frederick Herzberg posited a motivational theory which challenged traditional thinking about the motivation of employees' performance (Herzberg, 1966). In short he proposed that the employment factors which provide most satisfaction (are most highly motivating) to contemporary employees are those relating to the nature of the work, i.e. feelings of achievement, responsibility, challenge, growth, and earned recognition. The factors most highly frustrating Herzberg identified as "maintenance" or "hygiene" factors. These factors, which are peripheral to the work itself, include wages, personnel policies, methods of supervision, and working conditions. While these minimum job requirements can serve as sources of frustration if they are not satisfactorily addressed, they can not normally serve as sources of motivation even if they are properly provided for. For example, restrictive personnel policies can be frustrating, but the most desirable policies will not provide motivation in and of themselves.

While this hypothesis has not been universally accepted (Strauss, 1972), it has been supported by a study in a service industry (Myers, 1964) and in a public school system (Sergiovanni, 1969). As a part of this analysis I attempted to explore the relevance and implications of this theory in relation to day care. Staff members were asked to identify personal sources of satisfaction and frustration from a list of common employment factors in day care.

The outcome of the tabulation of these responses directly coincides with Herzberg's theory (Table 6.A). Eight of the ten factors most often identified by teachers as sources of satisfaction (such as "observations of the progress of the children" and "challenge of the work") are clearly related to the nature of day care work. Furthermore,

seven of the ten most frequently identified sources of frustration (such as "rate of pay" and "style of supervision experienced") can clearly be classified as maintenance factors. Finally, no maintenance factors were identified among the major sources of satisfaction.

While the major sources of satisfaction were generally operative in all centers, the maintenance factors tended to be handled much better in some centers than in others. Most significantly, I found that these minimum job requirements are being satisfactorily addressed in all HPC but not in most LPC. Thus they actively serve as sources of frustration in these centers (Table 6.A).

In general I was strongly impressed with the very high level of motivation apparent among day care staff members. This dedication is especially significant when it is considered that 91% of all those interviewed do not believe that day care workers are respected as skilled professionals by the majority of the American public (Table 6.C). Unfortunately, not too atypical of attitudes encountered was the observation by a New Hampshire congressman that since he doesn't get paid for breathing, women shouldn't be paid for taking care of children in day care centers.

I did not explore in depth specific causes of satisfaction or frustration with the exception of number of hours worked. In regard to this factor I found that although a number of other studies have consistently noted the fatigue resulting from the long hours teachers work (Haupt, 1972; Massachusetts, 1972), only 5% of the teachers I surveyed indicated that the number of hours they work are too long for them to be consistently effective. Teachers often observed that the number of hours was much less significant to them than the number of children thy were responsible for and the age of these children

Table 6. Motivation

A. Sources of Satisfaction and Frustration

--number of teachers indicating the following to be sources of satisfaction and/or frustration in their work.

Satisfaction		Frustration
62	Observations of progress of the children	?
62	Relationships with children	2
61	Challenge of the work	0
57	Pride in performing a public service	0
52	Relationships with parents	9
50	Recognition shown by staff members	4
47	Cooperation and motivation among staff members	12
46	Recognition shown by parents	10
46	Social relations with staff members	8
42	Pride in quality of the organization	0
36	Physical work environment	19
35	Fairness by which rules and policies carried out	11
34	Recognition shown by supervisor	13
33	Security of employment	13
33	Number of hours worked per day	19
31	Style of supervision experienced	19
25	Flexibility of personnel policies	16
22	Rate of pay	34
19	Prospects for advancement	22
3	Dealing with government officials	25

--percent of staff members in HPC and LPC indicating the following maintenance factors as sources of frustration.

	HPC	LPC
Rate of pay	0%	100%
Flexibility of personnel policies	0%	100%
Fairness in carrying out policies	0%	100%
Style of supervision experienced	0%	57%
Security of your employment	0%	58%
Recognition shown by supervisors	0%	33%
Level of staff motivation and cooperation	0%	30%

B. Hours of Work

--average number of hours worked per day by teachers...

All centers	7.0 hours
Large centers	7.3 hours
Medium centers	6.9 hours
Small centers	5.9 hours

Table 6. Motivation (continued)

--percent of teachers having 30 minutes or more in breaks outside the classroom on a regular basis...

All centers	46%
Large centers	83%
Medium centers	65%
Small centers	41%

--percent of teachers in all centers indicating the length of hours they work as...

Too long for them to be consistently effective	5%
Sometimes too long, sometimes not	65%
Too short for them to be consistently effective	5%
No opinion	25%

C. Attitudes toward Profession

--percent of teachers in all centers who...

Plan to make a career of day care	58%
Are undecided about making career of day care	26%
Believe day care workers are respected as skilled professionals by the majority of the American public	9%

Organizational-Environmental Interaction

While the first four sets of findings relate to relationships among staff members, there were also significant findings in terms of the relationship of centers to the community at large. One such finding deals with the level of support centers derive from parties outside of the center. In the questionnaire directors were asked to indicate the frequency, intensity, and degree of favorableness of their center's relationships with various outside parties. The basis of this line of inquiry is the hypothesis of Harry Levinson that organizational strength can be derived from meaningful outward relationships. He argues that

> ...the greater the number of attachments, the more secure the organization will feel. The wider the scope of gratification, the greater the likelihood that the organization receives stimulation from many different sources and the more energetic it is likely to be. (Levinson, 1972, p. 251)

The tabulation of responses generally indicated a low level of attachments by the centers (Table 7.A). This is most clearly illustrated by the fact that, with the exception of relationships with the parents, the majority of centers do not have frequent relationships with any of the parties listed. Similarly with only a few exceptions centers' relationships with outside parties were not described as intense. On the other hand, centers' relationships with all parties except lobbying and advocacy groups tend to be positive and constructive. Therefore, while a typical center's relationships with outside parties are basically positive in nature, contacts tend to occur infrequently and to be non-intense.

Further analysis of these responses reveals several more specific patterns. To begin with, only about half the centers with governing boards and sponsors tend to have frequent and intense relationships with these bodies. This coincides with the findings of my interviews with

staff members in which a common assessment was that board members or sponsoring agents are generally supportive of, but seldom knowledgeable about, the centers internal operations. Teachers and directors often tend to view their own governing bodies as part of their external environment.

Surprisingly a similar pattern of relationships seems to be common with parents. While in 86% of the centers relationships with parents are frequent and positive, in only 50% are relationships intense. Directors and teachers, with surprising unanimity, noted that once parents are satisfied that their children are in a safe and friendly environment, they do not demonstrate much concern over program components or approaches, or teachers' styles or qualifications. Conversely, inspite of the plethora of rhetoric on parent participation in day care, very few of the centers visited in either Phase I or II made deliberate and regular efforts to involve parents in planning and decision-making. For example, 85% of the teachers reported that parents' opinions are not considered in the hiring of teachers (Table 7.B). Nonetheless while staff members seem commonly to accept a low level of parent involvement as inevitable, few believe this to be a desirable state of affairs. Maintaining active parent participation was one of the three situations most commonly noted by staff members as a problem or weakness in their centers (Table 11.( ).

With the other outside parties the nature of relationships seems to be related to the degree to which these parties can meet specific immediate needs of the centers. For example, contacts with medical and mental health units, with which centers' relationships are most commonly intense, usually develop because centers seek specific assistance with individual children. Conversely, relationships with parties which potentially offer more general, long-term assistance (such as educational

consultants, colleges and universities, professional associations and other day care centers) tend to be less frequent and intense.

While 50% of the centers noted relationships with local, state, and federal agencies to be positive, it is interesting to note that dealing with government officials was cited as the second most frequent source of frustration for staff members (Table 6.A). Similarly "dealing with government red tape and funding delays" was cited as one of the major problem areas of day care (Table 11.C).

Table 7. Organizational-Environmental Interaction

A. Relationships with Outside Parties

--percent of directors describing the relationships of their center with the following outside parties as frequent, intense, and positive and constructive.

	Frequent	Intense	Positive and Constructive
Parents	86%	50%	86%
Governing board or sponsoring agency*	42%	52%	68%
Other day care programs	41%	28%	64%
Medical and mental health units	41%	64%	73%
Surrounding community	38%	19%	67%
Colleges and universities	36%	32%	59%
Educational and professional associations	30%	15%	60%
State and federal agencies	28%	59%	50%
Local news media	28%	33%	48%
Community service organizations	27%	27%	55%
Non-educational technical experts	25%	31%	44%
Educational consultants	14%	42%	52%
Local public schools	14%	23%	64%
Lobbying and advocacy groups	12%	17%	12%
Local government agencies	9%	32%	50%

*percent is of those centers with governing boards or sponsors

B. Involvement of Parents

--percent of teachers indicating that in the hiring of a new teacher...

Parents formally participate in the hiring process	5%
Parents' opinions are informally considered	10%
Parents' opinions are not considered	85%

Organisational Dependence

Centers' outward relationships were further examined to determine the extent to which centers are dependent upon outside parties. Directors were asked to indicate whether or not they or members of their staffs had full and final authority over various common types of decisions. Significant correlations in responses were found between the degree of authority or control and center size as well as legal structure. Staff members of small centers, which were predominantly sole proprietorships and partnerships, normally were found to hold full control over major decisions affecting their programs. Staff members of large and medium centers, which in this sample were predominantly corporations or sponsored agencies, seldom held final control over major decisions (Table 8.A).

These findings are certainly not surprising and tend to correspond to a similar analysis of centers in Los Angeles County (Prescott, 1972). However, the extent to which centers are dependent upon outside decision-makers is notable. In the large non-profit centers directors frequently do not have final authority over any major decision whether it be hiring a teacher, setting personnel policies, or adopting program philosophies. The situation is not significantly different in medium centers.

Other factors relating to control also tend to limit directors' authority. Centers' facilities are seldom owned by the centers (Table 8.D), thereby restricting the directors' ability to maintain and renovate the facility. More importantly centers are dependent upon a wide variety of sources of funding. Large centers in the survey each had on the average six different types of funding (Table 8.C). Not uncommon was a large center which depended on 12 different sources of revenue to run its program. As a result only 27% of the centers find funding to be secure

from one year to the next, which further limits the ability of the director to make rational decisions. Finally, 46% of the centers depend upon outside accountants to maintain their financial records (Table 8.E). Such arrangements range from centers hiring an individual local accountant to centers required to direct all financial information to central accounting units of their sponsors. Commonly staff members of the center maintain simple ledgers of income and expenses while the outside accountant maintains detailed accounts and prepares balance sheets, budgets and other financial reports.

Table 8. Organizational Dependence

A. Decisions Controlled by Center

--percent of directors indicating that the director or other staff members of the center have full and final authority over the following decisions:

	All C	LC	MC	SC
Hiring teachers	82	50	100	88
Firing teachers	68	50	75	75
Adopting program philosophies	59	0	63	100
Setting operating hours	55	17	38	100
Setting personnel policies	45	0	38	88
Setting salary levels	45	17	25	88
Setting fee levels	45	50	38	50
Renovating the facility	40	0	25	88
Purchasing major equipment	40	0	38	75
Setting age levels	40	0	38	75
Locating the facility	22	0	0	63
Hiring the director	13	17	0	25

B. Funding Certainty

--percent of directors indicating funding of their center on a year to year basis is...

Relatively secure	27%
Secure, but amount never certain	46%
Not relatively secure	27%

C. Sources of Funding

--average number of funding types per center:

All centers	4.0
Large centers	6.0
Medium centers	4.7
Small centers	2.0

--percent of all centers utilizing following types of funding:

Parents' fees	90%
AFDC (Title IVA)	64%
Other state programs	54%
Other federal programs	40%
Local government aid	40%
Fund raising projects	40%
Private foundations	36%
Other sources	47%

Table 8. Organizational Dependence (continued)

D. Facility Ownership

Rented by center	42%
Donated to center	33%
Owned by center	25%

E. Accounting Records Maintenance

--percent of centers whose accounting records are maintained by...

Director	29%
Other staff person	25%
Outside accountant	25%
Accountant from sponsoring agency	21%

Planning

In the questionnaire and interviews I addressed planning in its broadest sense, as I considered organizational as well as program planning. In terms of organizational planning I was interested in the extent to which centers viewed themselves as developing organizations, had clear conceptions of "what they were in business for," established realistic organizational goals, and developed workable plans for attaining these goals. In terms of program planning I was interested in the extent to which, as well as the methods by which, centers established curriculum goals, specified approaches for attaining these goals, related daily programs to these goals and approaches, and integrated new ideas into their programs.

Generally I found a low level of organizational planning in the centers I visited. Much of the energy and attention of directors was concentrated on immediate problems and emergencies such as renegotiating a contract with the welfare department. While these matters are relatively short-range in nature, they are often critical to the center's survival. Nonetheless the result is that directors or other staff members do not direct much energy into long-range planning for their organization. This is highlighted by the fact that only 15% of the centers have projected their needs and objectives over 12 months in advance (Table 9.A).

Of the 35 centers I visited overall, only two or three seemed to be so preoccupied with short-range problems that they had no conception as to where their organization was going. On the other hand, in only four of the centers could I find clear evidence that organizational planning was occurring in a deliberate manner. One possible explanation for this is a common attitude expressed by staff members in interviews that the purposes and objectives of a day care center are implicitly understood

and need not be further elaborated. Also teachers as well as directors often seemed to be intimidated by the more technical financial and legal components of organizational planning.

I found little correlation between center size and degree of organizational planning. Generally large centers have projected their needs and objectives somewhat farther in advance (Table 9.A). However, the centers in which I observed the most deliberate planning efforts as well as those with the least included large, medium, and small centers.

Surprisingly I found program planning to be occurrring at a rather low level also. One indication of this is the fact that in only 15% of the centers were staff members in full agreement as to the major areas of emphasis of their programs (Table 11.A). To some extent, of course, the infrequency of agreement may have been a result of the way choices were presented in the questionnaire. Therefore, I attempted to explore this issue in more depth in interviews with teachers. The following are some of the points revealed in these interviews:

> --in all but a few centers staff members have never sat down together to establish or discuss their center's curriculum objectives.
>
> --the majority of teachers interviewed could not state with certainty the curriculum goals of their programs.
>
> --when new teachers are hired it is not common that someone will describe for them the goals of the program.
>
> --as with organizational goals, most teachers believe that the goals of child development programs are generally understood by all day care teachers whether or not they are formally discussed.
>
> --teachers usually believe they perceive their center's program goals with sufficient clarity to implement them in their daily programs.

Thus while teachers perceive themselves to be in agreement as to the goals of their programs, the findings indicated that in most centers there was no such agreement. Teachers in the same center often had diverse perceptions of the goals of their program.

Another indication of the level of program planning is the frequency and content of staff meetings. Overall a majority of the centers hold staff meetings at least twice a month. Frequency varies significantly with center size as 75% of the medium centers, 63% of the large centers, and 25% of the small centers hold staff meetings twice a month. More significantly 67% of the HPC and only 17% of the LPC hold them that frequently.

In terms of the content of staff meetings, 66% of all staff members find them to be usually effective. While there was little variation according to center size, 100% of staff members in HPC and only 31% in LPC find meetings to be usually effective. However, program objectives and approaches are not directly discussed in these meetings. Rather these issues are more commonly interwoven into discussions of the behavior and development problems of individual children.

Finally I compared program planning by center types. "Clarity of program objectives" was rated much lower in large centers and in LPC than in medium and small centers and HPC (Table 5.B). "Degree of program planning" was rated as moderately high in medium centers and equally low in large and small centers. The lowest level of planning was found to occur in LPC (Table 9.D).

Table 9. Planning

A. Organizational Planning

--percent of directors indicating that their centers have projected their organizational needs and objectives...

Up to 3 months	19%
4-6 months	10%
7-12 months	56%
Over 1 year	15%

--percent of directors indicating that their centers have projected needs and objectives over six months in advance...

Large centers	100%
Medium centers	75%
Small centers	50%

B. Information Processing

--86% of centers do <u>not</u> have a formal procedure for collecting and processing information on ideas and developments related to day care.

--On the average centers subscribe to three magazines.

C. Staff Meetings

--percent of centers holding staff meetings...

	All C	LC	MC	SC	HPC	LPC
Once a week	37	50	50	12.5	50	17
Twice a month	17	12.5	25	12.5	17	0
Once a month	17	25	13	12.5	33	33
Once every 3 months	8	0	0	25	0	17
Less often or never	21	12.5	13	37	0	33

--percent of staff members who find staff meetings to be effective...

	All C	HPC	LPC
Always	25	39	12
Usually	41	61	19
Sometimes	31	0	63
Never	3	0	6

Table 9. Planning (continued)

D. Degree of Planning

--Staff members rated the degree of program planning in their centers on a scale of one to seven with one indicative of the very infrequent occurrence of planning and seven indicative of frequent (more than weekly) formal planning sessions. The following are the average ratings:

Teachers in all centers	4.0
Directors in all centers	4.8
Teachers in large centers	3.6
Teachers in medium centers	4.7
Teachers in small centers	3.6
Teachers in high participation centers	4.2
Teachers in low participation centers	2.7

Evaluation

As with planning, I examined evaluation in a broad sense. I considered separately the evaluation of 1) the organization as a whole, 2) the staff members, 3) the program, and 4) individual children.

Given the low level of organizational planning it is not surprising that I also discovered a low level of organizational evaluation. In fact only two of the centers I visited had initiated any effort to evaluate their centers as organizational units. Both of these evaluations focused on the general health and stability of the organization rather than measuring the centers' progress in meeting stated objectives. In the interviews some directors commented that since their organizations are small, they can informally assess how they are doing without resorting to any involved formal procedures. On the other hand, other directors felt that since they were so intensely involved in the daily operations of the center, they would welcome (but could not afford) the objectivity of an outside evaluator.

Financial monitoring, an important component of any organizational evaluation, is commonly occurring in centers. 77% of the directors review financial status reports at least on a monthly basis. 73% of the directors find these reports very useful (Table 10.A).

I also found that staff evaluations commonly occur. 85% of the centers evaluate the performance of staff members on a regular basis. Furthermore 63% of the teachers believe that performance appraisals are used in their centers to help employees improve their performance, and only 6% believe they are used as a means of discipline and control (Table 10.B). Examining this more closely I found that appraisal methods varied by center size. About two-thirds of the teachers in large and medium centers indicated

that their performance is appraised in a formal periodic manner. Appraisals in small centers consist exclusively of informal discussions with the director. In the interviews, while teachers generally agreed with the intent of appraisals, they often objected to appraisals being conducted by staff members who do not work with them or observe them on a regular basis in the classroom. Furthermore, since appraisals usually occur on an annual basis they are not particularly useful in informing teachers as to the effectiveness of specific actions, activities, and techniques. The only feedback of this nature teachers receive is from the occasional comments of fellow teachers and from observations of the children. This feedback, teachers commented, is most needed by teachers in their first year.

Program evaluations are used in all the centers. Most commonly these evaluations consist of observations by the teachers of the children. 86% of the centers use these informal observations as a means of evaluation, while only 29% utilize formal tests or evaluations of individual children, and 33% formal evaluations by outside experts (Table 10.A). In none of the centers did I observe evaluations of progress toward meeting specific program goals, either using subjective or objective measures.

Evaluations of the changes in individual children also commonly took place on an informal basis. Centers for the most part do not evaluate the developmental status of children upon their entry into the program, nor are such formal assessments normally performed on a regular basis thereafter. Most often evaluations of children involve discussions of specific children in staff meetings. Recognizing that such discussions tend to focus on "problem" children, several centers have implemented a system whereby all children are brought up for discussion separately in a series of staff meetings.

Table 10. Evaluation

A. Financial Monitoring

--percent of directors in all centers preparing or receiving financial status reports...

On a biweekly basis	14%
On a monthly basis	63%
On a quarterly basis	9%
Near the end of the budget year	14%

--percent of directors in all centers finding such reports...

Very useful	73%
Somewhat useful	23%
No opinion	4%

B. Performance Appraisals

--percent of teachers whose performance is evaluated...

	All C	LC	MC	SC
In a formal annual appraisal process	38	47	50	0
In formal conferences with a supervisor	30	20	15	0
In informal discussions with a supervisor	17	7	30	77
On an irregular basis or never	15	26	5	23

--percent of teachers in all centers indicating appraisals are...

Used as a means of discipline and control	6%
Used to help employees improve their performance	63%
Used to administer pay increases	12%
Used in no meaningful or consistent fashion	19%

C. Program Evaluation

--Column I indicates the percent of centers that utilize the following as one of their methods to evaluate their program, and column II indicates the percent of centers finding the following to be the most beneficial evaluation tools.

	I	II
Formal tests or evaluations of individual children	29	6
Formal observations by staff members using a regular format	43	11
Informal observations by staff members on level and modes and functioning of children	8(	35
Informal assessments by teachers of progress of individual children	72	15
Formal evaluations by outside experts	33	0
Comments and criticisms of parents	62	27
Reports or comments of advisory or governing board	67	0

Other Findings

In addition to the findings included in the eight areas discussed above, there were a number of other findings which I thought were sufficiently interesting to include in this report. While I do not believe it is necessary to discuss all of them here, I would like to make brief observations on several of them:

Major Areas of Emphasis (Table 11.A)--While it is not surprising that the major areas of emphasis cited by staff members lean heavily toward socio-emotional development, it is interesting that given the wide popularity of Piagetian and other cognitive curriculum approaches in current day care literature so few centers emphasize cognitive and perceptual motor skills.

Specific Objectives (Table 11.B)--In light of the debate as to whether or not it is harmful to teach reading and writing skills early it is interesting to note the low priority given the teaching of these skills.

Major Problem Areas (Table 11.C)--Not surprisingly four of the top ten problems identified by all staff members involved funding and budgetary matters. On the other hand, only one of the ten (#10 at that) involved staff management.

Table 11. Other Findings

A. Major Areas of Emphasis

--percent of staff members in all centers identifying the following as one of one or two major areas of emphasis of their center:

Learning to interact and cooperate with others	81%
Extending abilities for self-expression and creativity	51%
Increasing awareness of child's widening environment	43%
Development of inner controls in accordance with accepted behaviors	21%
Development of cognitive and analytical skills	11%
Development of physical coordination	10%
Refining perceptual-motor coordination	6%

--percent of centers in which staff members are in unanimous agreement as to...

One area of emphasis	70%
Two areas of emphasis	15%

--percent of responses of teachers which agree with major emphases as identified by their director:

High participation centers	39%
Low participation centers	63%

B. Specific Objectives

--From the following list of 30 skills, traits, and behaviors, staff members identified those which they believed their center makes a "CONSCIOUS, PLANNED" effort to foster in children. On the average each identified 24 ou. of the 30. On the following these factors are listed in or ler of the number of responses by all staff members.

Positive self-image	64 (100%)
Independence	64
Concern for others	63
Identification of basic colors	63
Cooperation	62
Good health habits	62
Self-expression	61
Trust	61
Creativity	61
Shape recognition	60
Physical coordination	59
Counting ability	59
Control of aggression	58
Plant life awareness	57
Honesty	57
Naming of objects	53
Inquisitiveness	51
Knowledge of alphabet	50

Table 11. Other Findings (continued)

Music appreciation	50
Size discrimination	48
Respect for authority	46
Attentiveness	45
Frustration tolerance	44
Good manners	43
Artistic ability	42
Knowledge of community	42
Word identification	41
Eagerness to read	36
Rules of society	35
Writing ability	34

C. Major Problem Areas

--percent of staff members identifying the following as major problems, weaknesses or causes for concern of their centers. (The exact meaning of "cause for concern" was apparently not clear in all centers and therefore was a source of some confusion in responses from a few centers.)

1.	Securing adequate funding	64
2.	Controlling children's anti-social behavior	51
3.	Maintaining active parent participation	50
4.	Dealing with government red tape and funding delays	46
5.	Identifying and dealing with individual needs of children	43
6.	Maintaining the facility and equipment	43
7.	Finding time for program planning	40
8.	Developing the annual budget	40
9.	Controlling expenses--living within the budget	40
10.	Maintaining staff morale at a high level	40
11.	Evaluating the program	37
12.	Obtaining satisfactory substitutes	36
13.	Implementing goals in daily practice	33
14.	Maintaining an effective training program	33
15.	Recruiting dependable volunteers	32
16.	Maintaining effective open communications between teachers and director	31
17.	Finding successful activities for late afternoons	30
18.	Dealing with inadequacies of present facility	30
19.	Maintaining program's comprehensiveness and creativeness	30
20.	Establishing and clarifying program goals	28
21.	Resolving and preventing staff conflicts	27
22.	Maintaining effective open communications among teachers	27
23.	Meeting the payroll with available cash	25

Table 11. Other Findings (continued)

24.	Maintaining good relations with parents	24
25.	Collecting parents' fees	24
26.	Keeping accounting records	22
27.	Providing health and nutritional services	20
28.	Integrating new children into the program	19
29.	Maintaining attendance of children at high level	17
30.	Overcoming staff members' resistance to new ideas	16
31.	Recruiting children	13
32.	Transporting children	13
33.	Maintaining licensing compliance	12
34.	Preventing staff members' absenteeism and tardiness	11

--major problem areas as identified by directors and teachers in the same centers were compared. 41% of the teachers' responses in HPC and 26% in LPC were in agreement with major problem areas identified by their directors.

D. Hiring Factors

--percent of directors identifying the following as major factors they weigh in teacher hiring decisions:

Personality and character	82%
Educational background	43%
Knowledge and philosophy	43%
Observation of candidate in classroom	39%
Work history	24%
References and recommendations	24%

E. Means of Recruitment

--percent of directors identifying the following as their center's most successful means of child recruitment:

Parent recommendations	73%
Referrals from social workers	43%
Yellow page listings	24%
Newspaper ads	11%
Notices in stores	5%

F. Periodicals

--percent of centers subscribing to the following publications:

Day Care and Early Education	44%
Young Children	39%
Voice for Children	28%
Early Years	16%
Child Care Quarterly	11%
Nursery School Business Letter	11%

(All others less than 5%)

Table 11. Other Findings (continued)

G. Professional Associations

--percent of centers participating in the following educational and professional associations.

State day care director associations	56%
Association for the Education of Young Children	44%
Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.	16%
Regional or local day care directors associations	16%
(All others less than 5%)	

III CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ultimate test of a research effort such as thi: is the reliability and applicability of its findings. In this regard, a preliminary analysis of the findings presented in Chapter II reveals a number of shortcomings. First, since the issues explored were so diverse, and since the findings are sometimes contradictory and unclear, broader implications are not readily apparent. Second, in retrospect it is clear that some issues were explored with the wrong questions; and some important questions were not asked. Finally, the critical relationship between managerial performance and quality of care was not directly studied.

I attempted to compensate for these shortcomings with the follow-up interviews and observations as well as by a review of relevant literature in the fields of education and business management. The purpose of these supportive research efforts was not only to qualify the specific findings; but more importantly, to clarify their overall implications. The procedure I employed was to analyze the individual findings so as to identify significant patterns of interrelationships and then to compare these correlations with relevant research findings in day care and organizational psychology.

The result of these further analyses was the identification of the following five criteria for the organizational health or vitality of a day care center. It is my conclusion that in order for a center to provide the highest quality of care and training of children it must satisfactorily address each of these criteria:

Criterion 1--Optimum Focus on Goals

Critical Elements: 1. Formal identification of what the center is in business for and what its goals are.

2. Clear understanding of and support for these goals by all staff members.

3. Development or selection of specific approaches for attaining these goals.

4. Implementation of these approaches in daily programs.

One characteristic of day care invariably noted in studies is the prodigious level of energy directed by staff members into their programs. However, the amount of effort invested by staff members is not in and of itself directly related to the effectiveness of the organization. To be effective these efforts must be focused on the goals of the center.. Energies expended on activities unrelated to these goals are wasted and may even dilute the effectiveness of the program. Emphasis must be on performance, not efforts (Drucker, 1974, p. 554).

To concentrate energies on goal-directed activities requires the existence of an active planning process in centers. The importance of planning was highlighted by David Weikart when, as a result of his intensive two-year comparative study of three different curriculum models, he concluded that intensity of planning is a more critical factor in the level of program quality than is the type of curriculum employed. According to Weikart the significance of planning is that it

> ...brings the adults in the program together, and focuses on integration of their ideas, so that they respond with purpose to the children. It produces a forward momentum, a pacing to the program that creates novelty and excitement for the children as well as for the staff...It produces in teachers a clarity of perception of each child... (Weikart, 1972, p 54)

The reality of day care, however, seems to be that planning is receiving little attention. None of the critical elements involved in

the focus on goals is being seriously addressed. To begin with day care as a profession has not clearly defined what centers are in business for. According to Bettye Caldwell, day care

> ...does not know whether it should serve the child, the parent, or the family. It cannot make up its mind whether it is a service for families with social pathology or for all families, whether it should be limited to children of underprivileged families, or to be offered to all children, whether it wants to change children or preserve cultural styles...(Caldwell, 1971, p 65).

This uncertainty is no less evident in terms of individual centers. Furthermore, my findings on the lack of agreement among staff members as to the major areas of emphasis of their program seem to indicate not only that staff members often do not have a clear understanding of program goals, but even that many centers have never formally established specific goals.

Other day care researchers have similarly noted a lack of definition in program approaches and a poor fit between stated goals and actual practices. For example, the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (I/D/E/A) in a study of 201 preschools (including nursery schools) in nine cities found "...scarcely any instances where teachers of young children were proceeding with a rather precise, sequenced curriculum designed to develop specific behaviors clearly envisioned by these teachers" (Goodlad, 1973, p 137). In this study planning was clearly interpreted in a formal behavioral sense. Given the present popularity of the "open classroom" philosophy the lack of formal planning in a behavioral stimulus-response mode may not be unexpected.

However, studies of centers espousing the open classroom philosophy have frequently found the lack of a clear understanding of the underlying goals of these programs also. For example, Margaret O'Brien Steinfels in

describing the haphazard physical arrangements of the open classroom centers she visited, noted that there was "little evidence that these were planned and ordered environments which are an integral part of 'open education' ... nor did their programs suggest such a curriculum." She concluded that these centers were "using the rumor of new learning theories to rationalize the poor use and planning of space" (Steinfels, 1973, p 97).

The low level of planning in day care programs seems to reflect a lack of appreciation for what planning can accomplish in a day care program. To begin with an effective planning process should result in the development of an overall program philosophy or framework from which the center's curriculum can be shaped. Such a philosophy should identify the center's assumptions about the child development process and about the role of child care workers in affecting this process as well as specify the goals toward which the center's efforts will be directed. If this philosophy is spelled out with sufficient clarity, it should serve as a guide to teachers for evaluating whether or not specific activities, approaches, or techniques will move the program forward. Simply to agree that a program is an "open," "structured," or "eclectic" one offers no theoretical underpinnings and no specific guidelines for assessing the relevance of methods and materials.

In addition to establishing a clarity of purpose for a program, effective planning should also have the effect of concentrating staff members' efforts within realistic bounds. The need for this concentration is most apparent in a centers employing a Skinnerian or behavior modification approach in which a set of specific behavioral objectives are pursued. If the center attempts to effect too large a number of behavior changes in the children, the staff will not be able to devote enough attention to activities leading to the accomplishment of any one objective. This assumption is based upon the principle of "concentration and critical mass," which asserts that...

> ...it is wasteful to embark upon certain learning objectives unless they are going to be pursued beyond some minimum point of intensity and continuity, short of which the effort will have little, if any, worthwhile pay-off...(Hostrop, 1973, p 165).

Such a narrowing of focus is also important for "open classroom" centers based on the interactive theory of Jean Piaget. Teachers commonly noted in interviews that focusing on specific goals is contrary to the underlying philosophy of open education that stresses the comprehensive nature of development which occurs as a child interacts freely with his environment. Implementing this philosophy in the classroom ideally would involve constructing a replica of the child's natural environment. However, since this is neither technically or financially feasible, centers must be selective in constructing their environments and developing their curriculums. Therefore, even in an "open" center a deliberate planning effort is required to identify a manageable range of interactions which it intends to encourage the children to experience.

In the broadest sense planning should also enable a center to clearly identify what it is in business for. Such an identification should define 1) who the clients are (children, parents, families, the community, or certain segments of one of these); 2) what needs are being addressed (the special needs of specific children, the developmental needs of all children, the child care needs of working parents, the employment needs of the staff, or the social responsibility needs of the board members); 3) what structural options are being considered (maintaining a small neighborhood center, enlarging into a large multi-service center, or spreading out as a system of small centers and family day care homes). Having a clear focus on these basic organizational dimensions gives a center a basis for developing strategies and making daily decisions in areas such as funding and staffing. A center without such organizational planning must drift with decisions based on immediate needs with little regard for the long-term effects of such decisions.

Criterion 2--Optimum Soundness of Decision-making

Critical Elements:
1. Location of authority nearest to sources of information.
2. Stability and clarity of decision-making process.
3. Economy of time and effort in decision-making.

In evaluating the soundness of any decision-making practice or pattern, it is helpful to apply the simple principle that the soundness of a decision is dependent upon the accuracy of the objective as well as subjective data upon which it is based. Using this rule of thumb I will consider the soundness of decision-making in day care in terms of the roles of governing boards, outside sponsors, and centers' staffs. The effects of decision-making on staff performance will be explored under Criterion 3 and on board participation under Criterion 4.

In discussing the roles of boards of directors in private industry Peter Drucker has observed that one thing they all have in common is that they do not function (Drucker, 1974, p 628). Such a judgement could be expanded to include governing boards of day care centers without greatly straining its validity. My observations indicate that the roles and relationships of day care boards and staffs are designed not on the basis of the specific needs of the organizations but more commonly on the basis of some standard model such as those of anti-poverty agencies or community welfare organizations. In accord with such models, boards typically are composed of representatives of the community (including parents) who, though usually well-qualified and well-intentioned, simply do not have the time to become intimately familiar with the daily operations of the program. As a result, they frequently either rubber stamp the recommendations brought to them by the director or make independent decisions based to a large

degree on intuition. At best such decision-making wastes precious time and energy of the director, and at worst it can be detrimental to the stability and sound development of the organization.

More critical than the membership of boards is the types of decisions they retain. Using the accuracy of information test, it would appear that relatively few types of decisions should most appropriately be retained by board members. Data relevant to decisions such as the hiring of teachers, the setting of operating policies, or the purchasing of equipment typically must be extracted from the classroom setting. For example, in the hiring of a new teacher the personalities, approaches, and areas of expertise of the current staff as well as the needs of the children are important considerations. Yet by the time this data is provided to or collected by the director and presented to the board, this information has been filtered several times with abridgements and personal reinterpretations being made each time. The most extreme example I observed was in a center operated by a housing authority in which a teaching candidate had to be approved by a parents' committee, then by a tenants' committee, and finally by the housing authority board. At the final stage the decision was made by men who had only the vaguest notion of what the teacher would do in the center. While centers' superstructures are normally less cumbersome, the general pattern of vertically processing the information would appear to hinder rather than insure sound decision-making. According to Drucker, "a structure that forces decisions to go to the highest possible level of organization rather than be settled at the lowest possible level is clearly an impediment..." (Drucker, 1974, p 555).

Several recommendations in regards to governing boards would appear to be in order. First, when a day care center is being formed or is considering changing its form of organization, it should avoid automatically opting to form a non-profit corporation. While this form of business may offer significant legal and political advantages, it also imposes some potential disadvantages including the complication of the decision-making process. These disadvantages should be thoughtfully addressed. For example, a feminist group seeking to create a non-sexist day care center might implement this philosophy most reliably by forming a partnership if their members are going to be teachers as well as decision-makers.

Second, if the decision is made to form a corporation, the board established should be as small as legally possible without excluding valuable resource persons. Third, in selecting board members, the level of commitment to the center of potential board members should be as important a consideration as their areas of expertise. Fourth, the roles of the board members as policy makers and of the director and staff members as administrators should be clearly defined and understood by all. The distribution of decision-making between the board and the staff should be formally agreed to in writing, with all responsibility not specifically retained by the board assumed to be within the staff's scope of authority. Finally, the board should retain only those decisions for which the need for objectivity or a broader perspective outweighs the need for depth of information, such as in the firing of the director or in the review of an annual audit report.

The tone of these recommendations may appear to be unnecessarily harsh. In defense of day care boards it should be noted that many centers receive invaluable support from board members in terms of fundraising, recruitment, and provision of legal, financial, and medical advice. However, in the great majority of cases this assistance is provided by board members in their roles as advisors and not as decision-makers. In general day care boards do not seem to fulfill constructive or indispensable roles in the decision-making process. In the final analysis, it should be possible to retain the positive contributions of board members without unquestioningly investing in them broad decision-making responsibilities (see Criterion 4).

A similar conclusion would apply in situations where centers are controlled by outside sponsoring agencies. In such situations the relationships between the center and the sponsoring agency should be identified and analyzed. In general, in areas where the sponsoring agency offers beneficial services, such as maintaining a steady cash flow or providing technical specialists, such relationships should be emphasized; and in areas where the agency removes vital decision-making from the scene of the action such relationships should be held to a minimum.

Of more significance to the overall health of a day care center, and more readily subject to change, is the way in which decisions are made

within the center. The findings of the survey indicate that internal decision-making is substantially retained by directors in many day care centers. The fact that 39% of the teachers indicated that their directors make major administrative decisions without staff consultation and that an additional 33% indicated that directors make tentative decisions prior to getting staff suggestions (Table 3.C) signifies a low level of participation in decision-making. This again would seem to be in conflict with the organisational principle that decisions should be made nearest to the sources of information affecting them (Beckhard, 1969, p 10). Since even with technical budgetary decisions, classroom issues such as the staff-child ratio and the provision for the physical environment are central factors, teachers should play an active role in administrative as well as program decision-making.

By itself a recommendation for greater participation is not particularly helpful since the issue is not quite so simple. On the one hand there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among teachers over the authoritarian nature of decision-making in their centers. Two-thirds of the teachers surveyed expressed a desire for increased participation in major decision-making, with the clear majority of these preferring a structure in which all staff members participated equally in making decisions (Table 3.C). Some teachers, on the other hand, do not desire, or do not feel qualified to handle such responsibility. This is not dissimilar from the situation in service industries where organizational psychologists have found that while increased participation has been welcomed by many employees, others simply have not been capable of coping with such responsibilities and actually prefer more authoritarian approaches (Maslow, 1965).

Furthermore, the style of decision-making does not appear to be a function of the organizational structure of a center. While the degree of hierarchy in an organization is typically related to the degree of authoritarianism in its functioning, this is not necessarily the case. To illustrate, one of the six centers in the survey in which teachers rated decision-making as most participative was a large hierarchically structured center. Conversely, I have also observed cooperative organizations (though not in day care) in which decisions were essentially manipulated and controlled by one person.

More directly relevant than formal structural arrangements are the informal roles and relationships which develop among staff members. In this regard, not only did I note that the roles of directors and teachers displayed a tendency toward polarization, but also that decision-making was rated most authoritarian in centers where roles were most noticeably distinct. The more directors concentrate their energies on administrative matters and teachers on program matters, the more narrow will be the input on decisions in both areas.

A related barrier to sound decision-making is that the staff person who makes most major decisions in a day care center is commonly the one who is least involved in the central activities of the organization. While the administrative tasks upon which directors spend most of their time are crucial, they are nonetheless supportive in nature. It is the teachers who are most involved in what Drucker refers to as the "result-producing activities" (Drucker, 1974, p 532), the planning and implementation of daily programs. Yet the teachers' involvement in the key decisions affecting their programs if often minimal.

The prevalence of this seemingly dysfunctional structure is to some extent the result of the fact that in day care it is the support activities

that are critical to the survival of the organization. With the possible exception of extremely good and extremely bad programs, the quality of care provided by centers bears little relation to their level or certainty of funding, since outside of the minimal licensing efforts there is basically no meaningful monitoring of program quality by parents or government agencies. While this anomaly may explain the central role assumed by administrators, it certainly does not require it.

Clearly there is a need for more experimentation by day care centers with alternative decision-making patterns and structural arrangements. Based on the findings of this survey the more widespread participation of all staff members in decision-making will not only improve the soundness of decision-making but will also improve interpersonal relations and staff motivation. This is not to say that leadership should be eschewed. Exercise of leadership and participation in decision-making are not mutually exclusive functions. Rather, meaningful participation in a sound decision-making process will probably not occur unless effective leadership is exercised by one or more individuals. Participation will not make for sound decision-making unless the process is maintained in a stable, economical fashion.

Criterion 3--Optimum Utilization of Internal Resources

Critical Elements:

1. Organization and integration of tasks.
2. Motivation and control of performance.
3. Maintenance of supportive relationships among staff members.
4. Provision for staff development.

The quality of performance of a day care staff is not directly related to the skills and qualities of the individual staff members. The findings of this survey suggest that performance is more significantly affected by

the extent to which a center enables and encourages the maximum utilization of these skills and qualities. No matter how talented a staff is, if it is hindered in its efforts by disorganization and confusion or if it is discouraged by the style of supervision it experiences, it will function far below its potential. More specifically, maximum utilization of staff resources is dependent upon the concentration of staff members' attention on results-producing tasks and upon the direction of performance through self-control.

The focus on key tasks is important for two reasons. To begin with, those factors most often identified by teachers as sources of motivation were those related to the work itself. This means that the best way to motivate a day care staff is to structure the center's tasks so that members develop meaningful relationships with their work. Concentration on tasks is also important since to the extent that staff members' physical and psychic energy is diverted into non-productive or counter-productive tasks their available energy for productive tasks will be reduced (Levinson, 1968, p. 7).

One approach for developing a focus on goals, which is an adaptation of a process recommended by Drucker (Drucker, 1974, p 532), is as follows:

1. Identify all tasks involved in operating the center from the broadest (such as encouraging independence in children) to the most mundane (such as cleaning the toilets).

2. Categorize these tasks as to whether they are a) "result producing" activities, those which move the center toward the accomplishment of its goals; b) "support" activities, those which are necessary for the survival or safe functioning of the center (such as collecting parents' fees, securing the building, or hosting local politicians) but which do not result in progress toward goals; or c) "unproductive" activities, those which commonly occur but are not essential and would happily be avoided (such as curbing children's screaming, repairing the furnace, or sorting children's clothes).

3. Design the organization in terms of its formal structure, its curriculum model, its staffing and children's grouping patterns, and its physical environment so that result-producing activities are the central focus of attention and energy, support activities are fully accomplished but with the minimum of effort and disruption, and unproductive activities are eliminated or restricted.

Some examples of changes that might result from such a process are distributing some routine administrative tasks among all staff members so that the director has more time to support and assist teachers in the classrooms; redesigning the physical space to eliminate tempting precarious perches so teachers need not spend their time guarding against children's accidents; upgrading equipment and facility maintenance efforts so that less energy is drained into emergency repair efforts; formally defining the center's policies in sensitive areas such as verbal and physical aggression so that enervating conflicts and misunderstandings over these issues can be minimized; and developing a specific agreement with the board as to its duties so that precious meeting time is not wasted on inappropriate discussions.

The second prerequisite for maximum utilization of staff resources, direction of performance through self-control, while considered separately here, is inextricably related to the accomplishment of task and role clarification. Even if a center's operations are designed to make possible a maximum utilization of available resources, performance of staff members will not necessarily improve unless it is effectively controlled in accord with the overall design. A conceptually sound organizational plan is useless if sufficient control is not exerted over its implementation.

Control, however, does not simply mean the dispensation of rewards and punishments from above. Rather in its most effective form control is exercised by staff members, as individuals as well as in concert as a team, over their own performance. Such a system of self-control can occur when a situation is created in which "...the members of the organization can achieve their own goals best by directing their efforts toward the success of the enterprise." The operating assumption is that "...people will exercise self-direction and self-control in the achievement of organizational objectives to the degree that they are committed to those objectives" (McGregor 1960, p 56).

Significant advantages accrue from the exercise of self-control by staff members. Energies are directed toward the accomplishment of organizational objectives rather than toward the approval of an authority figure. Motivation tends to be high since attention is focused on the nature of the work, and ingenuity and self-development tend to occur at a high rate (McGregor, 1967, p 147).

On the other hand this approach has clear shortcomings. To begin with the process involved in attaining the state where there is a high integration of employee and organizational goals can be an arduous one in which human relations skills and sensitivities are strained to the limit. Certainly the issuance of directions by a central authority figure is a much more straightforward and economical process. Additionally, many teachers do not desire the responsibility that goes with self-control and operate more comfortably under external control. Finally, in day care where a major emphasis (at least in theory) is on the importance of the opinions of parents in the shaping of goals and policies, the attaining of a match between the goals of employees and the organization is further complicated.

Within the real limits imposed by factors such as these, I believe a high degree of self-control can be achieved if two considerations are satisfactorily addressed. First if staff members are to substantially control their own performance they must have clear and accurate perceptions of the standards and goals of the organization as well as of their roles and how this relates to what everyone else is doing. This means that not only must the philosophy of the center be specified in concrete, applicable, and public terms, but also that the tasks of the organization must be effectively identified and organized. If goals and roles are unclear or confused, staff members will have no sound basis upon which to direct and evaluate their behavior.

The second consideration is that staff members will be willing and able to exercise self-control only to the extent that they are allowed to participate in the making of major decisions affecting the organization. As was implied earlier, individuals will have little incentive to exercise self-control in the service of goals to which they have little personal commitment. If they feel excluded from the formulation of decisions in areas profoundly affecting the direction and development of the organization (such as the shaping of the budget, the hiring of staff, and the setting of admission policies), staff members are not likely to be highly motivated to control their behavior in accord with the requirements and directions imposed by these decisions. Conversely, when staff members are allowed to participate in a meaningful way they will more fully understand the reasons for and the implications of decisions and will feel more personally responsible for the successful implementation of decisions.

Such a conclusion is well-supported by the findings of the survey. Teachers in the six High Participation Centers consistently rated their centers far more favorably than teachers in the six Low Participation Centers in terms of communications, mutual support and trust, handling of conflicts, control methods, clarity of objectives, flexibility and fairness of personnel policies, and style of supervision experienced (Tables 5.B and 6.A). The findings also revealed a high level of dissatisfaction among teachers with their lack of participation in decision-making (Table 3.A). In the follow-up interviews many teachers (but not all) expressed notable frustration over not understanding more about how their centers were operated and why certain decisions were made and voiced strong desires to be allowed more participation in administrative as well as program decision-making.

In discussing their eagerness for greater involvement teachers were generally not implying that directors should run around explaining every

decision they make to staff members. Such one way communication is of limited value. Nor did they aspire to participate with an equal vote in every decision. What they did recommend was a greater utilisation of teachers' talents in the handling of administrative responsibilities. Directors often countered that administrative duties must be centralised to avoid confusion and that teachers do not have the necessary time or skills to handle such responsibilities. Yet in two of the centers I visited in which administrative duties were shared among teachers, these responsibilities were being exercised very effectively and efficiently. Teachers in these centers were highly motivated and challenged by these responsibilities and commonly observed that these duties increased their sense of involvement and commitment to their centers.

An added advantage of such an arrangement is the range of variety it provides to the duties of staff members. The importance of such variety lies in the fact that considerable physiological as well as psychological fatigue develops when workers are confined to a single operation (Drucker, 1974, p 184). In line with this the Abt Study revealed that teachers who spend time away from the children on non-teaching duties tend to be more effective when they are with the children (Abt, 1971).

In summary the optimum utilisation of internal resources is in large part dependent upon the effective clarification and organization of the tasks of the center and roles of the staff members. A center will perform most effectively when all staff members clearly understand their roles and relationships, participate in a meaningful, practical manner in decision-making, and are encouraged and enabled to exercise self-control in the direction of their performance.

Criterion 4--Optimum Utilization of External Resources

Critical Elements:

1. Collection, analysis, and utilization of information on relevant theories and technologies.
2. Participation of parents in program development and implementation.
3. Maintenance of supportive relationships with community and national organizations.
4. Participation in political decision-making affecting day care.

Despite the national resurgence of interest in day care, individual day care centers largely exist in a state of professional and intellectual isolation. This situation was revealed in my survey (Table 7.A) as well as in the intensive I/D/E/A study (Goodlad, 1973, p 126). This is primarily the result of the vicious circle in which centers are caught. Due to the inadequate level of funding, center staffs must exert much of their energy "on survival strategies, on justification of the existence or cost of a given center, or on other absurd tasks unrelated to the human issues of day care" (Mattick, 1973). Thus not only are critical energies drained away from central program tasks, but they are also deflected from positive political and public relations efforts to improve the level and delivery mechanisms of day care funding.

As a result of this vicious circle, centers have generally not been able to develop positive supportive relationships with parents, governing boards, sources of technical assistance, or the general public. Since there is not likely to be relief from the pressures on the time and energy of centers in the forseeable future, some means will have to be found to more effectively restructure these relationships within existing energy levels. Such a restructuring might profitably be accomplished by applying the theories of Lawrence and Lorsch. They contend that if an organization is to perform

effectively in its particular environment, there must be a close fit in the characteristics of each organizational unit with those of the segment of the environment with which it interacts (Lawrence, 1969).

This need to develop a "close fit" is most apparent in terms of relationships between centers and parents. The standard roles prescribed for parents are as volunteers in the classroom, as participants in parent meetings, or as members of an advisory board. Parents are clearly expected to modify their behavior in accord with the needs of the center. This approach ignores the fact that a day care center is generally only a small part of a family's total "Child Care System" and even a smaller part of a family's "total organization for the management of life" (Bank Street, 1975. p 2). To obtain a closer fit with these broad family needs of day care parents, Bank Street College recommends that centers establish dialogues with parents in which they seek out specific services they can offer to families to support their efforts to exercise control over their lives.

Relationships with governing boards are similarly mismatched at present. This is due to the common confusion about the role of board members. By law, board members are fully and finally liable for the overall operations of the center. Therefore, board members must be willing and able to make informed decisions about a full range of educational and administrative matters. However, board members are often selected not because they are knowledgeable about child care or child care programs but because they have a relevant specialized area of expertise. For example, a banker may be asked to serve on a board because of her expertise in financial matters even though she may have little understanding of the educational philosophy of the center. It might

be more appropriate to instead invite such valuable resource persons to participate as advisors in small informal task forces related to their areas of expertise. The banker, for example, might more beneficially spend her time participating in staff meetings in which the annual budget is being developed than by participating as a board member.

The analysis of relationships between centers and the various sources of technical assistance also suggests some possibilities for improvement. To begin with relationships between centers might be more beneficial if teachers in the classrooms were utilized as the agents for the exchange of program and management ideas. While state and regional day care associations offer promising avenues for interchange, their value is presently limited by the fact that their predominant participants are administrative personnel. (At a meeting of one such association in New England, a recent proposal to expand membership to include teachers was soundly defeated).

Linkages between centers and area colleges are no more satisfactory at present. Colleges use centers to provide in-service training for their students but often offer little of value in return. An exception to the rule is the University of New Hampshire in Durham which offers many practical services such as workshops and a popular newsletter for area day care centers. This example suggests that day care centers should exert concerted pressures on the local institutions of higher education to exercise more creativity in meeting legitimate community needs.

Finally centers themselves need to exercise greater creativity in relating to the world of politics. Except for a corps of politically aggressive centers, day care practitioners have remained sadly silent in the face of widespread public misunderstanding about the practices and effects of day care. This

silent majority could exert a significant influence if the full range of political avenues open to them were considered. Centers which cannot or will not find time for political action as it is narrowly viewed at present (such as testifying at public hearings or demonstrating in front of city hall), could probably promote the interests of day care as effectively by inviting their congresswoman or mayor to have lunch one day at their centers with the children (Morgan, 1975).

Criterion 5--Optimum Openness to Change

Critical Elements:

1. Evaluation of organizational and program performance against stated goals.
2. Continuous provision of feedback on employee performance.
3. Implementation of changes based on evaluation findings.
4. Periodic reappraisal of organizational and program goals.

According to John Gardner to prevent rigidity and inflexibility "...the organization must have built in provisions for self-criticism. It must have an atmosphere in which uncomfortable questions can be asked" (Gardner, 1965, p 20). While all the centers I visited were concerned about evaluating their programs and were attempting to do so in a number of ways, there were few centers where these efforts were deliberate and effective. Similarly in the 201 centers in the I/D/E/A study

> teachers were not engaged in any systematic evaluation of their children. They were not using observation scales or other instruments in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of each child...In addition school staffs were not meeting together for purposes of examining goals, activities, needs and the like regarding current emphases and future revisions. (Goodlad, 1973, p 142).

One reason for the lack of effective evaluation programs is that since few centers had clearly specified goals their evaluation efforts lacked direction. More significantly, however, is the simple fact that there are no well-developed tools for centers to use in their evaluations.

> Sophisticated instruments with which to measure such elusive quantities as self-esteem and social development are not available. Even in the cognitive realm, the IQ test and other instruments used to assess preschool gains were never intended for that purpose (Mayer, 1971, p 312).

This lack of available technology suggests that the development and experimentation with evaluation approaches is a logical area for initiative among centers either individually or in concert. Embarking on an endeavor with such clear and far-reaching implications could be a challenging activity for centers' staffs. Furthermore, the process of developing, testing, and refining an evaluation system could serve as a rewarding staff development exercise.

In the area of program evaluation several imaginative outlines might serve as starting points from which to initiate experimentation (Mattick, 1972; Frank, 1969). On the other hand there is a general paucity in current day care literature of promising approaches for the evaluation of staff resources or overall organizations. In these areas centers might more profitably turn to the literature of organizational psychology for ideas.

While studies have indicated that day care teachers' classroom behavior is widely divergent from their own perceptions of it (Schwertfeger, 1972, p 102), current appraisal processes are of little value in identifying such divergences. To be effective feedback on performance must be timely, it must focus on critical aspects of performance, it must be in a form that is useful to the employee, and it must be his tool (Drucker, 1974, p 268). This suggests that centers should explore more continuous, immediate, behavior-specific feedback mechanisms.

In terms of organizational evaluations, team development approaches utilized in organization development could be usefully adopted to the needs of day care (McGregor, 1967; Schein, 1969). The management self-appraisal questionnaire included in Appendix B. might serve as a starting point in such an effort. Any such appraisal should involve an evaluation of the performance of the organization in achieving its goals, as well as an analysis of its performance in terms of criteria of organizational health such as those presented in this chapter.

Evaluations at all levels should not be initiated without a concomitant commitment to making revisions suggested by the evaluations. Such revisions may range from modifications in classroom procedures or teaching styles to redefinitions of program approaches or major goals. Such an evaluation process not only has the direct effect of improving a center's performance in specific areas, but just as importantly it serves to maintain the vision of staff members on the objectives of the program as well as on the direction of the organization as a whole.

In summary I found that from an organizational point of view day care centers are not functioning particularly well. All day care centers seem to function poorly in terms of criteria such as focus on planning and openness to change, and some centers were not satisfactorily addressing any of the criteria. Such pessimistic judgements may seem unwarranted, especially since almost all the centers I visited were successfully operating on-going programs. In only two of the centers was there a real threat to continued survival. Many centers displayed exceptional ingenuity and perserverance in maintaining worthwhile programs for children in the face of never-ending adversities.

This apparent contradiction results from the fact that I measured performance against optimal levels of functioning and not mere survival. Therefore, more properly stated my conclusion is that centers are functioning well below their levels of potential. Although it is highly significant that centers are surviving at all given present conditions, nevertheless

day care programs in general have much room for improvement in the operation of their centers as results-producing organizations.

In presenting in this chapter what I have identified as the five underlying criteria of organizational health, I have introduced numerous theoretical and practical suggestions from the field of organizational psychology. While I strongly recommend the consideration of such approaches, I would caution against regarding these as a panacea. To the extent that management theories are as subject to widespread variations and contradictions as early childhood education theories, there is certainly no unified set of principles which can be directly applied in the day care setting. Yet I believe that many management practices can be usefully employed by day care workers as tools with which to effectively organize and direct available resources. Certainly the increased sense of direction and purpose which can result from such efforts will be a source of satisfaction for all involved. However, if the available resources (either financial or human) are inadequate, the use of such practices may only guarantee that the hopelessness of the situation will be grasped more clearly.

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APPENDIX B. GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

Purpose: To help a day care center staff assess its level of organizational health in terms of the key functions of planning, decision-making, and utilisation of staff resources; and to identify any specific areas needing improvement.

Step 1: Pass the questionnaires out to all staff members and briefly discuss the meanings of all the questions so all are interpreted similarly. Have staff members fill it out anonymously with the assurance that no attempt will be made to ferret out the "author" of any individual response. For questions 7-12 have answers as concise as possible (about 5 words).

Step 2: Have several staff members tabulate the responses and prepare a chart showing the results. For question 1 compute the average rating for each category and indicate the high and low ratings for each; for question 2 chart the number of responses for each "style" under A, B, C, and D separately; for questions 3-6 indicate the number of times each statement was circled; for questions 7-12 list all responses for each question. On the chart group the questions as follows, or in a similar fashion, for ease of analysis:

Planning: Questions 1.E, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 12.

Decision-making: Questions 2, 10.

Utilization of Resources: Questions 1.A-D, 4, 8, 9, and 11.

Step 3: Distribute charts with responses to all questions to all staff members. As a group identify those questions where patterns of responses indicate potential problem areas. For example, for question 1 any category with a rating below 5 or with a wide range in responses probably denotes a need for improvement. Under question 2, compare differences between perceptions of (A & B) and preferences for (C & D) decision-making. A noticeable variance indicates a need for further attention. Under questions 3 and 12 the degree of agreement on goals should be studied. If there is little agreement this would seem to indicate a poor definition or understanding of goals. Once any potential problem areas are identified set aside specific times (either all at once or in separate meetings concentrating on separate areas) to probe these areas further and to initiate possible improvement efforts.

Note: Questions 1 and 2 were adapted from McGregor, 1967, and Tannenbaum, 1958.

1. Rate each category below on a scale of 1 to 7:

_____A. Mutual support and trust

1. Staff members are polite, guarded, distrustful, closed, careful; are afraid to criticize or be criticized. ⟷ 7. Members trust one another show genuine concern for one another; can freely express negative reactions without fearing reprisals.

_____B. Handling conflicts within staff

1. We deny, avoid or suppress conflicts ⟷ 7. We accept our conflicts and "work them through"

_____C. Control methods

1. Control is imposed on us ⟷ 7. We control ourselves

_____D. Communications

1. Guarded, cautious, infrequent, insufficient ⟷ 7. Open, frank, authentic, timely, sufficient

_____E. Clarity of program objectives

1. Objectives of our program are unclear, seldom discussed, and poorly understood by staff members ⟷ 7. Specific objectives of our program are clearly established, regularly discussed, and fully understood by all staff members

2. Which of the descriptions listed below most accurately describes in your center...

_____A. the way major administrative decisions are made?

_____B. the way major curriculum-related decisions are made?

_____C. the way you would <u>prefer</u> major administrative decisions to be made?

_____D. the way you would <u>prefer</u> major curriculum-related decisions to be made?

1. Director makes decision and announces it.
2. Director makes decision and sells it.
3. Director presents tentative decision, gets suggestions, makes final decision.
4. Director presents problem to some staff members, gets suggestions, makes decision.
5. Director presents problem to entire staff, gets suggestions from all, makes decision.
6. Director presents problem and participates as equal member of staff in making decision.
7. Director defines limits, asks staff to make decision.
8. All staff members share equally in defining problems, making decisions.

3. Circle the letter before the two areas listed below upon which your center places its major emphasis.

A. Learning to interact and cooperate with others
B. Development of physical coordination and health
C. Development of cognitive and analytical skills
D. Development of inner controls in accordance with accepted behaviors
E. Refining perceptual-motor coordination
F. Increasing child's awareness and knowledge of his widening environment
G. Extending abilities for self-expression and creativity

4. Circle the letter before each factor listed below which is a significant source of frustration to you or hinders you from performing your job as well as you want to.

A. Insufficient familiarity with theories and techniques of child development
B. Lack of skills for handling incidents or patterns of inappropriate behavior
C. Insufficient sources for practical ideas for daily classroom activities
D. The physical environment in the classroom
E. Lack of appropriate classroom supplies and equipment
F. The way I am supervised
G. Lack of recognition or support you receive from other staff members
H. Lack of cooperation among staff members
I. Responsibility for the supervision of too many children
J. Personnel policies: what they are and how they're administered
K. The way administrative matters such as financing and purchasing are handled
L. Lack of contact with, or cooperation from, the parents
M. Other factors: specify...

5. Circle the letter before each of the following with which you do not agree:

A. The way children are grouped
B. The way teachers are structured
C. The design of classrooms
D. Parent participation policies

6. Circle the letter before all of the statements below which accurately describe the normal situation in terms of staff meetings.

A. Held too often
B. Not often enough
C. Uninformative
D. Too long
E. Too short
F. Unproductive
G. Too disorganized
H. Too structured
I. Not relevant

7. What subjects, if any, should receive more attention in staff meetings?

8. What is the one thing that most frustrates you in your work at this center?

9. How would you describe the relationships among all staff members?

10. What is your opinion about the level of participation in major decision-making?

11. What is the major weakness of the center?

12. What is the major curriculum goal or objective of your center?

APPENDIX C: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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